



SINGAPORE MEDICAL COUNCIL

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PRESS RELEASE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE INQUIRY FOR DR AMALDASS S/O NARAYANA DASS

1. A Disciplinary Committee ("DC") inquiry (the "Inquiry") was held for Dr Amaldass S/O Narayana Dass ("Dr Dass"), age 44 years, on 22 August 2012, 30 October 2013, 20 January 2014 and 20 May 2014.
2. The Inquiry arose out of a complaint to the Singapore Medical Council ("SMC") made on 1 April 2010 by one of Dr Dass' patients (the "Complainant"). The complaint pertained to an open rhinoplasty (the "Procedure") performed on the Complainant by Dr Dass, as well as the attendant pre- and post-operative management provided by Dr Dass (the "Complaint").
3. At the time of the Complaint, Dr Dass was practising as a general practitioner at Advanced Aesthetics & Surgery Pte Ltd.
4. The charge preferred against Dr Dass was for professional misconduct under section 45(1)(d) of the Medical Registration Act (Cap. 174) for failing to discharge his duty of care in the conduct of the pre-operative, intra-operative and post-operative management of the Complainant (the "Charge"). The particulars of the Charge are, *inter alia*, that Dr Dass:
 - a) failed to adequately explain the risk and complications of the Procedure to the Complainant before offering to perform the Procedure;
 - b) failed to ensure that the Complainant was effectively sedated before commencing performance of the Procedure, and failed to halt the

Procedure and/or provide appropriate pain relief despite the Complainant indicating that he was not properly sedated;

- c) left a vestibular dressing in the Complainant's nasal cavity without informing him of its presence;
 - d) left remnants of a knotted thread in the Complainant's glabella region; and
 - e) subsequently performed a second open rhinoplasty but failed to remove the implant despite overwhelming evidence of infection.
5. Dr Dass had initially claimed trial to the charge but during the course of the Inquiry, had elected to plead guilty to the Charge. He was duly convicted by the DC.
6. In its Grounds of Decision, the DC observed that doctors must maintain, and be held to, the highest and noblest standards of professional competence and ethical conduct. The DC also noted that it was the expectation, and indeed presumption, that doctors would relentlessly, uncompromisingly and unfailingly defend, uphold and adhere to these standards that formed the foundation of the public's trust and confidence in the medical profession and that underpinned the high and enviable esteem in which the medical profession is held by the public.
7. The DC found that Dr Dass had failed to uphold those standards of professional competence which were to be expected of him. He not only failed to discharge his duty of care to the Complainant, but did so to such an extent or in such a manner that it constituted professional misconduct.
8. The DC also found it significant that Dr Dass failed to discharge his duty of care at the pre-operative stage, the intra-operative stage, as well as the post-operative stage of the Procedure. It noted that it was more reprehensible when a doctor failed to discharge his duty of care at all of the aforesaid three stages of a surgical procedure, than if he were to fail to do so in only one aspect or at only one stage of a surgical procedure. In the DC's view, the very extent of Dr Dass'

misconduct would undermine public confidence and trust in the medical profession.

9. In sentencing Dr Dass, the DC took into account the following:
 - a) Dr Dass' involvement in social and volunteer group activities with the disabled, and his voluntary work teaching children at the Ramakrishna Mission and his provision of medical care for the monks at the Ramakrishna Mission, providing medicine at his own expense;
 - b) The fact that Dr Dass was no longer practising, and had undertaken that he would not again practise aesthetic medicine, and that he was presently practising emergency medicine at Khoo Teck Puat Hospital where, based on the many testimonials furnished to the DC, he appeared to be doing good and valuable work; and
 - c) The fact that Dr Dass had pleaded guilty, although the DC noted that this mitigating factor was somewhat diluted by the fact that he had done so at a very late stage of the Inquiry.

10. At the same time, the DC also noted that, as highlighted by the judgment of the Court in *Low Cze Hong v. Singapore Medical Council* [2008] 3 SLR(R) 612, it was necessary to send "*a strong signal that the ethical duties of a doctor must be adhered to at a level that is commensurate with the high level of trust and esteem that society reposes in the medical profession*", and must show "*a determined and uncompromising attitude to maintain the highest standards so as to protect the public and to preserve the reputation of the profession*".

11. Having considered the submissions tendered and having taken into account all of the circumstances of the case, the DC ordered that Dr Dass:
 - a) be suspended from medical practice for a period of **4 months**;
 - b) pay a penalty of **S\$5,000**;
 - c) be censured;

- d) give a written undertaking to the SMC that he will not engage in the conduct complained of or any similar conduct; and
- e) pay the full costs and expenses of and incidental to the proceedings, including the costs of the solicitors to the Singapore Medical Council (on the basis of one counsel) and the Legal Assessor.

12. The DC also ordered the Grounds of Decision to be published.

APPEAL BEFORE THE COURT OF 3 JUDGES

13. Dr Dass filed an appeal to the High Court in relation to the DC's orders vis-à-vis suspension and on the matter of costs. The appeal on these matters were heard before the Court of 3 Judges on 11 November 2014 and was dismissed with costs.

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